

REMARKS

The language added by amendment here to claim 1 finds support at page 6, lines 2-7 of the Substitute Specification. Newly added claim 13 describes structure, for example, shown in Fig. 1 of the drawings.

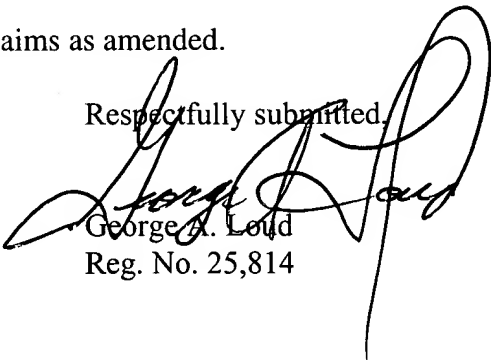
The rejection for obviousness over Bacchi et al in view of Tateyama et al is respectfully traversed. As stated at page 4, lines 9-13 of the Substitute Specification, the first objective of the present invention is to avoid contamination of a clean room by contaminants generated by drives of mechanisms serving to move and reposition the port door and the sensor. Neither Bacchi et al nor Tateyama et al achieve this objective. In the present invention this objective is achieved by placing these drives on the opposite side of the port plate relative to the clean room. See page 5, line 18 to page 6, line 7 of the Substitute Specification. Note that the last subparagraph of claim 1 defines the drives for the “port door horizontal-movement mechanism”, the drive for the “sensor horizontal-movement mechanism” and the drive for the “port-door-and-sensor vertical-movement mechanism” as being all disposed “on the FOUP side of said port plate”. This structural feature has now been further elaborated upon by addition of the language “thereby isolating said drives from the clean room.” Neither Bacchi et al nor Tateyama et al disclose such a feature and, accordingly, the feature of isolating these drives from the clean room is not suggested by a combination of such teachings. In Bacchi et al, the drive mechanisms for the sensor fingers are located within the clean room when in operation. See, for example, Fig. 15 of Bacchi et al. Note that the scanner motor 320 is mounted within the port door 76, as taught, for example, at column 8, lines 49-52 of Bacchi et al. Likewise, as can be seen, for

example, from Fig. 6 of Tateyama et al, if the sensor mechanism of Tateyama et al were to be substituted for that of Bacchi et al the drive would remain on the clean room side of the port plate. Accordingly, no combination of these reference teachings leads to the invention as claimed.

The rejection of claims 4-6 for obviousness over a combination of Bacchi et al, Tateyama et al and Lane et al is also traversed. While Lane et al teach evacuation of load lock chamber 112, load lock chamber 112 does not contain any drive mechanism. As can be seen in Fig. 11, which is described in the teaching of Lane et al referenced by the examiner, the drive mechanism for the door 238 is external to the load lock chamber 112. Accordingly, Lane et al is not considered by applicants to be relevant to the additional structure recited by claims 4-6 which includes a separate chamber housing the drive mechanisms. Further, Lane et al is not relevant to the other claims because of lack of any disclosure of a sensor mechanism and positioning means therefor as defined by claim 1.

In conclusion, it is respectfully requested that the examiner reconsider the rejections of record with a view toward allowance of the claims as amended.

Respectfully submitted,


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